THE NEW UNITY

PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF THE AMERICAN CONGRESS OF LIBERAL RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.

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JUSTICE + LOVE + REVERENCE
AMERICAN CONGRESS OF LIBERAL RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES
UNITY

The American Congress of Liberal Religious Societies.

To unite in a larger fellowship and co-operation, such existing societies and liberal elements as are in sympathy with the movement toward undogmatic religion; to foster and encourage the organization of non-sectarian churches and kindred societies on the basis of absolute mental liberty; to secure a closer and more helpful association of all these in the thought and work of the world under the great law and life of love; to develop the church of humanity, democratic in organization, progressive in spirit, aiming at the development of pure and high character, hospitable to all forms of thought, cherishing the spiritual traditions and experiences of the past, but keeping itself open to all new light and the higher developments of the future.—*From Articles of Incorporation of the American Congress of Liberal Religious Societies.*

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HIRAM W. THOMAS, *Chairman*, EMIL G. HIRSCH,
E. P. POWELL, R. A. WHITE, A. N. ALCOTT,
JOSEPH STOLZ, A. W. GOULD, CAROLINE J. BARTLETT,
JENKIN LLOYD JONES, *Managing Editor*.

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Editorial

Holiness is an infinite compassion for others; greatness is to take the common things of life and walk truly among them; happiness is a great love and much serving.

—Olive Schreiner.

WE would call the attention of our readers to the proposed Mutual Study Club, set forth in The Study Club column of THE NEW UNITY this week.

FRIENDS of an elevated drama will be pleased to learn that the classical department of Beloit College, Wisconsin, will present in this city, at Central Music Hall, next Saturday evening (March 23), the great tragedy of Sophocles, "Œdipus Tyrannus." The play will be given in English; and the part of Œdipus, we are informed, will be taken by a negro student.

A LETTER from Mrs. J. Hewitt Broadus, Ewing, Neb., the local agent of the State Relief Commission, comes to us urging the people of the United States not to think that the needs of that state have yet been supplied. The people there fear that the next three months will be as trying as the last three months have been, and that no permanent relief will come until the new crops are gathered.

THE law passed in Illinois to put a stop to the "sweating" devices of unscrupulous employers, has been declared unconstitutional, because it deprives women of the liberty to sell their labor as they choose. This is one of the many instances where liberty is invoked by the employers to hold fast their helpless victims. We may well say with Madame Roland, "Liberty! how many crimes are committed in thy name!" What we want is more "love" in our lives and less "liberty" in our talk.

THE newspapers report that the three great libraries of New York are to be consolidated. This will be welcome news to every student that has had to consult such divided libraries. Here in Chicago we have to go to the North Side and then to the South Side to consult the public libraries, and soon, no doubt, we shall have to go to the West Side also. All the libraries of the city ought to be in one great building, or at least in one great block, if they are intended to be used and not merely to ornament the different quarters of the city. As well scatter the different volumes of your encyclopædia or your Century Dictionary in the different rooms of your house, as scatter the different collections of books through the different parts of a great city. Time is money with the business man, and time is more than money with the hard-pressed student.

THE Boston Universalist paper, *The Christian Leader*, asserts in its editorial column that "the Congress is but the incipiency and to some extent the outcropping of a new and hostile sect." Whether the Congress is to be a sect or not will depend upon how it is treated by other religious organizations. If they all cut off their members for working with the Congress, then we shall be forced to become a sect in spite of ourselves, as the early Unitarians were, in spite of the protests of men like Channing. But if the Congress is a sect, it is certainly neither "new" nor "hostile." It cannot be hostile to Universalism because it is made up largely of Universalists—unless, indeed, such men as Dr. Shutter, Mr. Bisbee, Dr. Crowe and Mr. White are regarded as hostile to their own denomination; for these men are all directors of the Liberal Congress. And it cannot be new, because it is on exactly the same basis on which the Western Unitarian Conference has been working for many years, the basis of absolute mental liberty.

THE Chicago *Universalist* asks THE NEW UNITY whether it is "ethical, not to say fraternal," for the Congress to employ a missionary "whose value to the movement consists chiefly in the fact that he holds the Universalist fellowship." The value of Mr. Alcott to the Congress of Liberals does not in the slightest degree consist in the fact that he holds the Universalist fellowship. His value consists solely in his vision of a religion that is broad enough to take in all who believe in absolute mental liberty. That is what makes him valuable to the Congress, and apparently that is exactly the quality which has caused him to be judged unworthy of the Universalist fellowship. So that we prize him for just what the Universalists condemn in him. And so far from his Universalist fellowship being a help, it seems as if he had been made much more valuable by the public withdrawal of that fellowship. People are now everywhere eager to hear him, as a man so liberal that even such a liberal denomination as the Universalist suspended him. But even if we had employed him because he was a Universalist, we cannot see anything unethical or unfraternal in the act. He can remain a Universalist minister and can preach just the same religion he has

been preaching in his own Universalist church, and the societies he may form are entirely free to become Universalist societies if they so desire. We are simply paying a Universalist minister to preach Universalism; and the Universalists ought to thank us, if they really want their religion propagated. But by suspending such a a man from its fellowship the Universalist denomination seems to declare that it is a punishable offense for one of its own ministers to preach the Universalist religion, unless he is employed by the Universalist denomination as such. "Forbid him not," was what Jesus is reported to have said when his disciples wished to stop those who preached his religion but did not follow him. We would commend the advice of Jesus to the Universalists in Mr. Alcott's case. "Forbid him not!"

The Longer Vision.

Spiritually as physically, man is an "upward looker," as the Greeks called him. He is a far-seeing animal, and to the far-sighted the landscape becomes harmonious. Order and not chaos is written upon the horizon line; method and not chance, reality and not sham is the long-ranged verdict of the race. Reason as well as sentiment will lay hold of principle, if you will only give it time enough. Experience as well as prophecy justifies trustfulness, enthrones righteousness and reveals to us a benignant providence, stretching the warp and shooting the woof through the fabric of all lives studied at long-range. The dirt of our streets, to the short-sighted student, is mud in wet weather and dust in dry weather. In either case he grows petulant under the annoyances which it brings. But to the man whose sight is prolonged by science, the far-sighted man of knowledge, mud is bread and honey, it is meat and clothing, it is that metal, now in baser form, which by the known alchemy of nature and man can be, aye, is, continuously changed, year by year into the gold that feeds and protects life. To many house-living worms, who are never out of a night except when bent upon small purposes and near desires, the heavens above are but rain fields spattered with meaningless stars; but to the tent-living shepherds of the East the starry host came forth in martial array, and they loved to count them. They worshiped the belt of Orion and listened for the music of the Pleiades. The astronomer in his solitary observatory, with his far-reaching glasses, discovers majestic order. He sees the planets going their eternal rounds with infinite precision, paying their respects to each other, never a moment behind. Mars nods to Mercury and Venus courtesies to Saturn. So sure is the astronomer that there is meaning in their shyings and their beckonings that Leverrier turned his glass towards their suggestion and found Neptune in the supposed vacancy. Longer vision always discovers the universe belted with law in every department. The winds are no longer fickle. They are being calculated upon, weighed, measured, and their journeyings anticipated. They are no more accidents to the wise, for every accident is a consequent of calculable or uncalculable forces. The wise railroad man knows the limit of the axle's endurance, and he knows that if it goes beyond that there will be a calamity. Every piece of iron that the engineer put into the government bridge at Rock Island was registered, the power of its endurance marked, the date and limit of its safety noted. The same law holds in regard to social forces and moral agencies; and did we know enough, as perhaps some day we shall, moral calamities could be foretold. Certain humble virtues build and ennoble the state. Certain vices, as humble, inevitably undermine the state.

As we climb this wheel of law, the more confident are the lessons of the far-sighted. On these long lines we see the forces of chemistry pushing themselves into botanical forms; vegetable forms reaching after animal powers; the fish rising into reptile; the reptile growing the wings of a bird; the quadruped straining every muscle to become a biped; and in the same way, in obedience to the same law, the far-sighted sees the dark soul of man bleaching into whiteness. Looking over the long fields of human history he sees how mankind has been now coaxed and now pushed onward; looking on these long lines, say who can that there is nothing to believe, nothing to trust, nothing to work for! See how that young girl's coarseness writes itself upon her cheeks spite of her rouge and ribbons. See that woman's selfishness and pride writing hard wrinkles instead of tender lines upon her face. See that debauchee writing his signal lights of disgrace and warning upon his very nose,—and tell me who can that "you do not know that you believe anything." See the pestilence stalking from city to city, slaying its thousands, because garbage is allowed to rot in its alleys and the mouth of its sewers is open to the streets. Next see how pestilence sends its thrill of horror throughout the city, and sinners are brought to their knees by an outraged law of physics.

If men's triumphs are insignificant, their shames are not. If men's virtues mean nothing to you, their vices have a divine significance. Who would exchange the shame and blushes of a sinner caught in his sins for the tidiness and complacency of a Java sparrow with its soft pink bill and flexible claws? What means the sham, the pretense, the flattery, the hypocrisy of the world? It is the compliment of short-ranged skepticism to long-ranged faith. It is imperfection thirsting for perfection; the compliment of the false to the real. Who would not rather taste the hemlock with Socrates or feel the nails with Jesus, than to strut in the feathers of a peacock or to rejoice in the litheness of a tiger or the prowess of a lion? Who would not rather be a depraved man than a spotless lamb?

It is the long-ranged vision that gives us the faith that "love works at the center" and nerves us to push "forward to the borders of day." We acknowledge the corruption that the near view discloses, and still recognize the eternal God revealing Himself in the growing humanity that takes cognizance of this corruption and cries out against it. We see the selfishness and feel its worthlessness in the life that is ours; but we are compelled to acknowledge God in that recoil from selfishness which pronounces it worthless and enables us to despise the life we live; that grants us unhappiness in the presence of our imperfections. We recognize the facts that lead to the short-ranged skepticism, that distrust which is born out of the near vision; but we believe that the long vision sees in this very distrust the workings of the larger faith which recoils from thoughts unworthy and acts that are out of joint with God's universe. The doubts of man are born out of men's actual, their faiths are born out of their ideal.

"Manhood—the actual? Nay, praise the potential.
What *is?* No, what *may* be—sing; that's man's essential."

An Unfortunate Example.

THE CHRISTIAN LEADER, the Universalist paper at Boston, in its last number, editorially accuses THE NEW UNITY of forgetting that "a little over a decade ago," the Unitarian Association expelled from Unitarian fellowship one of its most saintly ministers, the late Rev. Mr. Potter, of New Bedford; and by a curious irony of fate—or of ignorance—the editor uses the case of Mr. Potter to rebuke THE NEW UNITY for venturing to criticise the Universalists' suspension of Mr. Alcott.

Poor UNITY! It has been compelled to see the American Unitarian Association withdraw from it and from the Western Conference, simply because it advocated open fellowship and denounced such narrowness as that which had dropped men like Potter from the list of ministers in the Year Book; and now it is accused of complicity with those who thus dropped Mr. Potter's name. Truly we *are* known to outsiders by the company we keep, even when that company casts us off for opposing its narrowness.

But of course the charge of *The Christian Leader* was made in ignorance of the facts. The editor could not have known that the Western Conference for many years has cordially welcomed to its fellowship all who wished to establish truth, righteousness and love in the world. Neither could he have known that Unitarian churches are all purely congregational, and therefore absolutely free to choose any man as minister and ordain him; and that, when chosen, he is a Unitarian minister in regular standing.

No "Unitarian Fellowship Committee," no "Unitarian Association" has any more right or authority to "expel" a minister from "Unitarian fellowship" than the Pope at Rome has. Any man or any committee of men can make a list of ministers and call them Unitarian and publish them to the world, if no one cares to stop it. But that list can no more put into the Unitarian fellowship the men whose names it contains,

and put out those whose names it omits, than a directory can make and unmake citizens of the United States.

But even if the facts were as *The Christian Leader* supposes, and the Unitarians had never expelled Mr. Potter, his case would be the very worst that could possibly be brought up as a justification of Mr. Alcott's suspension—unless, indeed, the Universalists expect to repent of their action by the next decade. For the editors of the Year Book reversed their action and restored the name; and there is probably not one Unitarian now living who does not most profoundly regret the temporary dropping of that name. The action proved as unwise as it was unjust and uncongregational. It inflicted incalculable harm upon the Unitarian name, while it did not inflict the slightest harm upon Mr. Potter.

This is indeed the usual result of such ecclesiastical censures nowadays. They hurt the denomination more than they do the victim. It is like the case of the dog that Goldsmith sings of in his elegy. The dog "went mad" and bit a "godly man" with whom he had "been friends."

"Around from all the neighboring streets
The wondering neighbors ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits
To bite so good a man.

"The wound, it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye,
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

"But soon a wonder came to light
That showed the rogues they lied:
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died."

A. W. G.

Modern Improvements in Heaven.

Some one tells of a New York woman who said to a Boston sister, "And so you think heaven is like Boston, do you?" To which the Boston woman replied, "Well, I used to, but you know there have been many improvements in Boston within the last twenty years." No doubt many and great improvements have been made in the Hub lately, but we think that this good Boston lady overlooked the fact that many and great improvements have also been made in heaven within the last few decades. It is no longer the dull and stupid place it used to be, with all the great men and women of the world going in the other direction. The stream of emigration has changed, and such men as Emerson and Parker and Potter, Darwin and Huxley, and even the genial Col. Ingersoll himself, are being ticketed to heaven whether they will or no. It is fast becoming a desirable place to go to, and Boston and even Chicago itself will have to look to their laurels or people will actually prefer heaven to earth.

One of the most striking instances of this improvement is seen in the *Independent* of February 28th. In that paper Professor Herrick Johnson, of Chicago, denounces the Christians who joined in the Parliament of Religions. He said their attitude was compromising; that the mere recognition of any religion outside of Christianity was a repudiation of the exclusive claims of Christianity; that to unite in the Lord's Prayer with heathen was to reject the express teaching of Jesus, because "Jesus expressly denied to those who did not love him the right to call God, Father." He appeals "to the law and the testimonies" and easily proves that his claim is scriptural, that "God's express order was destruction and not assimilation" of other religions.

Of course this is the genuine orthodox theory, and a generation ago it was held by all the Christian churches except a few of the liberal ones. But the significant thing regarding this article in the *Independent* is that this view seems confined now to Mr. Johnson alone. He thunders against his fellow Christians for backsliding from the God of destruction; while even the very paper in which his article is published disowns him in its editorial columns and casts him off, so that he seems a voice crying in the desert of outgrown dogmas.

No matter what the fathers' creed may have been, the children of today will not hear of an unjust God or an exclusive religion. They may seem to hold to the older creed, but they try to persuade themselves, as an admirer of Wagner's music did, that "it really is not so bad as it sounds." The terrible exclusion from heaven of the vast majority of mankind cannot be tolerated. The heaven of today must be accessible and attractive to all good men even among the heathen. So the modern improvements in heaven go on quite as fast as the modern improvements in Boston or even in Chicago. God must keep ahead of man, heaven must be better than earth, if religion would lift men upward and not drag them down.

A. W. G.

Old and New.

Star Dust Revealed by a Sunbeam.

About a thousand schools were sustained by the Buddhists in Ceylon last year. In 1888 they had but twelve.

The father of Mr. Dharmapala, the gracious representative of Buddhism at the Congress of Religion, recently subscribed one thousand rupees in the aid of the Maha-Bodhi fund, which fund is to be devoted to the unification of Buddhism by a return to the simplicity of the Master; a subordination of Buddhist sects to Buddhist morals.

In an article on the Lowell Institute from the *New England Magazine* for February we learn that there were given 286 regular courses of lectures, or 3,720 separate lectures; with repetitions, 4,079 free lectures between 1839 and 1894. Where is there another city so favored as Boston? Where are there other John Lowells to bless other cities in the same way?

Frederick Douglass in the discharge of his duties as Commissioner for Hayti was a resident of Chicago throughout the World's Fair. During that time he was a regular attendant at All Souls Church, Chicago, and for the most part made his home with one of the families belonging to the parish. His was a freed soul as well as a freed body. He believed in the religion of the open mind and the universal heart.

It is said that the trustees of the Crerar Library in this city have decided to make it distinctively a scientific library. A pretty liberal construction, however, is likely to be put on the term "science." Such a public library, with its three million dollars endowment, to be the most important one of its kind in the world, will add vastly to the educational influences and agencies of Chicago.

In each volume of an edition of Stevenson's works which the author gave to his friend and physician, Dr. Trudeau, he wrote a special dedication; and "The Book-Buyer" presents these to the public. "Underwoods" has this couplet:

Some day or other ('tis a general curse)
The wisest author stumbles into verse.

"Prince Otto" is introduced by these lines with their ingenious rhyme:

This is my only love tale, this Prince Otto,
Which some folks like to read and others not to.

And this merry querry accompanied the "Travels with a Donkey."

It blew, it rained, it thawed, it snowed, it thundered,
Which was the Donkey? I have often wondered.

Western Reserve University. Adelbert College of Western Reserve University is to begin at once the erection of a new library building, the gift of Mr. H. R. Hatch of Cleveland. It will have capacity for about 125,000 volumes besides large spaces for reading and study rooms, and will be built of stone, in the later Gothic style. The architect is Mr. C. F. Schweinfurth. The laboratory of physics which Mr. Mather built for the university is just completed. The dental college of the university will also occupy a new building at the beginning of the next University year. The growth of the Dental College and the growth of the Medical College have obliged the university to supply itself with this new building, which is leased by the university and provides excellent quarters.

Western Reserve University is to establish its first summer schools July 1st. Schools will be opened in all the leading subjects taught in college. They are for the special use of teachers. Some of the most distinguished teachers of the university will give instruction. The time of the school is July 1–27.

President Thwing is also arranging for a Summer School of Theology to begin the first of July and to continue through the ninth. It will be modeled after the Oxford School of Theology of last summer. Among the lecturers will be Principal Fairbairn of Oxford, who was at the head of the Oxford Summer School and who will lecture every day. Among the others who will give lectures are Rev. Dr. A. H. Strong, president of Rochester Theological Seminary, Professor Arthur C. McGiffert, Ph. D., of Union Theological Seminary, Rev. Dr. B. W. Bacon of Oswego, Rev. Dr. George A. Gordon of the Old South Church, Boston. Single lectures are expected from Bishop Leonard of Ohio, Rev. D. N. Beach of Cambridge, Rev. Dr. Russel B. Pope, one of the distinguished clergymen of the Methodist church. In this school it is proposed to have a special series of lectures on the doctrine of God in literatures. Beginning with the Anglo-Saxon literature, this doctrine will be studied, in separate lectures, as it appears in German, French, Greek, Latin and English literatures. It is proposed to follow out the Oxford plan of having four lectures a day. The fee for the whole school of theology will be $10.

Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson has just finished a course of lectures before the College for Women of this University upon "Literary Life in America." The chapel of Clark Hall has been crowded with students, professors and citizens.

The Liberal Congress.

Hospitable to All Forms of Thought: Everyone Responsible for His Own.

The Pulpit and the Pews.

Whether asleep or waking, who shall say?
Not I, for one, but, be that as it may,
The aged organist avows he heard
What here shall be related, word for word.
A man devout he was and true, who mused
Much on eternal things, and wide diffused
Through old St. Calvin's arches high and dim
The echo of the heavenly seraphim.
On Sundays and at wedding festivals,
At costly christenings and at funerals,—
But I digress; that which he told to me
Must be set down without more parley.
He
Affirms it happened on a Sunday night
At service close, if I remember right,
Somewhere about the early part of June.
The last strain of a dear familiar tune
Throbs in the organ's mighty heart, while he,
The player, holds the chord caressingly.
The bustling sexton hurries here and there
Extinguishing the lights, the sexes pair,
Until at last the stragglers all are gone
And in the church the dreamer is alone.
He knows not, if he slept, when he awoke;
But certifies to this: the Pulpit spoke.

THE PULPIT.

I long have meant to speak a word, dear Pews,
Upon a theme on which I fear your veiws
Are sadly lax. About this subject vext
And ramified, were I to preach, my text
You'd in Ecclesiastes find, writ plain,
So plain no wayfarer may read in vain.
But better an informal talk I deem
With what the preacher speaketh as a theme.
In chapter seventh, verse the sixth, is this:
Like crackling thorns beneath a pot, so is
The laughter of a fool,—which personage,
Undoubtedly, dear friends, the ancient sage
Meant should personifiy the skeptic, he
Whose outbursts of denial prove to be
As fatuous as crackling thorns that burn
To dust and ashes for all men to spurn.
Or, if you like, agnostic we shall call
Him who believes he can send to the wall
With sneering laughter the ineffable
Until all tests are found infallible.
Which cachinnation as innocuous is
As is the burning branches' fitful hiss.

THIRD PEW

If this, dear Pulpit, be a colloquy,
I'd like to ask a question.

THE PULPIT.

Certainly.

THIRD PEW.

If so the crackling thorn is laugh of fools,
As to the pot's contents, how teach the schools?
Is it the seething caldron of theology
In this our day? Kindly enlighten me.
I'd like the "solid contents," as it were,
Of that same pot.

THE PULPIT.

Precisely. I aver
The "solid contents" a known point to be
Of mathematics, not theology,
Which sort of "point," as scientists conclude,
"Position" has, but never "magnitude."
And hence we see as at a single glance
Your question's utter insignificance!
Said I not, brethren, that ye all are lax,
E'en now see Science rear her head and tax
The Word for reverence of fact.
Now I
Am one that holds, as all can testify,
That Science in no fearful jeopardy
Places our holy Faith, but rather she
Becomes more like a little child each day
With pebbles by the sea of Truth at play.
The vessel and its contents matter not,
The import of the metaphor.

FIFTH PEW.

The pot
Is metaphor. Like crackling of the thorns
Beneath, the laughter of the fool that scorns—
Your pardon, but I'd like much to inquire
If a similitude you hold the fire.

THE PULPIT.

Aha! Dear friends, I beg of you, to mark
That we are never left quite in the dark
As to essentials in the written Word,
Or to the "points," "Five Points" as you have heard.

FIFTH PEW.

Which being all unmathematical
It surely cannot be heretical
To hold that Calvin's "points" have magnitude
But no position, or as I conclude,
None that at this late date is tenable,
Nor, sir, to reason quite amenable!

FIRST PEW.

Brother, you do forget yourself to speak
Thus in the Pulpit's presence. Where the meek
Receive the earth, *you* never need aspire!—
But we are speaking, I believe, of fire.

THE PULPIT.

We were, dear brethren; please to mark this well,
In Holy Writ it symbolizes Hell
Invariably. And please to notice next,
The fool, who is the subject of our text,
Will find at last that which he held before
As highly colored Jewish metaphor
To be a veritable lake of fire
Fed by an angry God's eternal ire,
Which shall devour, without consuming, all
To whom he never willed effectual call.
Hence, friends, and finally, observe I pray,
Since he who laughs best, laughs the last, how they
Who hold the doctrines from expediency,
If from no higher cause, at last shall be
Found at the Right Hand with the blessed sheep,
While fools and scoffers gnash their teeth and weep.

THE GALLERIES (singing).

"Lead Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom
Lead Thou me on.
The night is dark and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.
Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask to see
The distant scene, one step enough for me."

NINTH PEW.

You can't alarm me with a sulphurous smell;
I don't believe in it. 'Tis very well
To frighten boys with, whom you chance to see
Purloining apples from your favorite tree.
They will disgorge and run, but, all the same,
I find the present cane, than threat of flame,
Far more persuasive, in such cases. Then
We are not told that our first parents, when
Caught in a like offence (and I must say
If ever there were sinners it was they),
Were threatened with the fire that quenches not,
But dealt with most summarily on the spot.
Why was no mention made of endless Hell
In that stupendous moment, please to tell?

LAST PEW.

O brother, don't you know? That story, now,
Is held an allegory, and I vow
That squelches every theory for me
Of doom before or after, don't you see!
There's quite enough to set my soul aflame
Right here in church where I would save the same.
One thing is what the Psalmist calls the scorn
Of those that are at ease night, noon and morn.
Of course St. Calvin, rich and prosperous,
Is not intended for the like of us.

THE PULPIT.

You shame its teachings, brother, speaking so;
Is not salvation free, I'd like to know?

LAST PEW.

It used to be and may be so again,
And in a sense it is so now, but then,
While free to millionaires and such, the crumbs
Are flung to mission chapels in the slums.
I've been there, at a chapel where a youth
Sprouted a pair of whiskers with the truth.
And told us if we all were poor and low
It was because the Father loved us so.
But if we'd every evil habit cast,
And be real good, that we might go at last
To great St. Calvin and be rich, you know.

NINTH PEW.

Aha, my brother, you don't have to go
To mission chapels only, to be told
That righteousness is worth its weight in gold!
Nor to behold, held open before your eyes,
For spiritual effort, worldly prize.

THE PULPIT.

And with authority the Psalmist says,
Who loves Jerusalem and all her ways
Shall prosper largely here and ever more,
But never they who in her seek a sore—
Bear that in mind, you carping cavillers,
Time was the Pulpit silenced swaggerers!

CAMP CHAIR (in aisle).

Sirs, for my brother I've a remedy,—
I, too, have felt the scorner's scorn as he,—
Perhaps I have no right to take the floor,
As I'm no pew holder, but a furor
Ecclesiastical, my friends, find me
All there,—as on a flower's breast, the bee!
But that's not to the point. Plebeians mine,
For indigence you need no longer whine,
Thank God that libraries are now quite free.
Take out a favorite volume, come with me
Beyond the city's din, the churches frown,
Beside some little hymning brook sit down
Beneath a tree and open wide your heart,
Likewise your book; 'twill always take your part.
'T will never ask you if you wear a ring
Or Purple and fine linen, never sting
With side-long glance, and the great company,
Apostles, heroes, martyrs, saints, shall be
Who fold their wings and straightway come to meet
E'en me the staggering make-shift of a seat!

MIDDLE PEW.

'Tis Emerson, I think, who says he likes
A church, a priest, and all the rest, that strikes
Right home.

THE PULPIT.

Ah, you would lend your patronage
To Christ's own Temple, where himself in rage
Scourged the blasphemers!

CAMP CHAIR.

Now, then, Brother Pew!
The reverend gentleman cannot mean you
By "blasphemers." Come, let us have your view.

MIDDLE PEW.

Just one word more, please, I'm so tired out
By business all the week, and bile and doubt,
That when the Sunday comes I only know
I love to steal a while away and go
Into the Tabernacle with the blest,
And feel that one day we shall be at rest
Where that for which all things on earth are sold
Our feet shall tread on, for the streets are gold!

FIFTH PEW.

I hold with you, my brother. So I love
God's Temple, image of the house above
Not made with hands. I love the Sacred Word,
And, too, the voiceless prayers, heard of the Lord
No less than those on winged words that rise
Like incense from the place of sacrifice.
Where in His name are gathered two or three
Has He not promised there Himself to be?
It is not good for man to be alone;
And books, my friends, have offered me a stone
When I have hungered. But whene'er I sought
The very Presence in His earthly court,
I have drunk quenching waters and been fed
At His own table with a living bread.

NINTH PEW.

And I—I am a wanderer from the fold.
I fall an easy prey to greed of gold
And worldly temptings, but I feel within
As here I muse a hatred of the sin
That drags me earthward and prevents my soul
That longs to press on to the heavenly goal,
Free from the bonds that bind, the aims that ban,
To run the race that worthy is a man.

SIDE PEW.

It is not thus with me. The agony
Upon my prostrate soul lies heavily
Of this discordant world. To me it wears
A woman's look in pain, who hardly dares
To lift her eyes upon the thing she bears.
Such monsters she has borne of sin and shame
That her fair offspring blush to own her name.
The needless woe, the torture undeserved,
The good man stricken down, the bad preserved;
The rude awakening from Youth's bright dream;
The witnessing Truth's robe without a seam
Parted and torn by shame, and cant and hate;
Disaster whose repair comes late, too late;
The growing old and finding little true,
The wishing we had died when life was new,—
These sights and sounds unutterably sad
Bid my soul seek a balm in Gilead.

FIFTH PEW.

Turn hitherward the foot that well nigh slips,
And God shall put a new song on your lips.
Come, friends, with me. I love her every part,
Christ's church on earth for which His lonely heart
Bled on the cross. I hear the preacher's call
The reading of the Word, but more than all
I love the hymns: for they bring back to me
Old memories; and pictures dear I see
Of faces all exultant, sad or shy,
Of lips that white and trembling said good bye,
Of eyes that shone once, and once only, bright
With an effulgent glory from the white
Throne of God, then closed for evermore.
I seem to stand upon the very shore
And watch the sunrise of that endless day
Wherein, if naught else, tears are wiped away.

GALLERIES (singing).

"So long thy power hath led me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone.
Then with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since but lost awhile."

Just here the organist was made aware
That from the keyboard fell his fingers, where
They all this time had held in cloudland awed
The "Lux Benigna's" last triumphant chord.

C. L.

The Demoralization in Literature.

I referred but recently to the open immorality of Lord Ormond and his Aminta, and to its praise in high moral and religious publications. And the demoralization of our literature goes merrily on. Within the current month Miss Gilder in her role of critic has called attention to two new publications; one issued from one of our oldest and most respected book firms, which she calls "a loathsome book," and the other issued by its editors, which she calls "a yellow indecency."

Mr. Grant Allen's book, which Miss Gilder outlines, must be of a piece with the Woodhull Claflin literature of twenty years ago. But at that time a general outcry was raised against it by all decent people; it was published at their peril by the authors, read in privacy, if at all, and openly denounced everywhere. Now it is sent out by a leading publishing house, is brazenly claimed by its author as the truest fruit of his spirit, and will doubtless be lauded everywhere by the people whose watchwords are, "To the pure all things are pure," and "Art for art's sake." We have only to look back a little way to find numbers of books which might be described by Miss Gilder's adjective, as "loathsome." Nearly all current French novels come under this head; but English writers are fast outdoing the French in their pandering to depraved tastes. At any rate, as Miss Gilder happily remarks, the French introduce their "cocaltes" frankly as "cocaltes," and don't label them "pure women." Du Maurier is French enough to do this himself; it is only his gushing admirers who try to pass Trilby off as a saint.

This recent "Descent into Hell" of our literature is significant of much. The world had but just emerged from the coarseness and sensuality of the last century. We had enjoyed a period of comparative purity. We hoped the tide of morality was rising. We could almost venture to give our novels into the hands of the young. Then this new irruption of the barbarians began.

And that they find an audience to welcome them enthusiastically shows that there is the same old taste for low society among us as of old. For we do live in very low society indeed with the novelists of today. Their amours and intrigues are infinitely disgusting. Their audacious ribaldry is shocking to all our finer feelings. Their talk is seasoned with such profanity as never comes to our ears in real life; the pages reek with their orgies of drink and smoke, and their conversation is that of a pot house.

As Ruskin says: "It is quite curious how often the catastrophe, or the leading interest, of a modern novel, turns upon the want, both in maid and bachelor, of the common self-command which was taught to their grandmothers and grandfathers as the first element of ordinary decent behavior. But the automatic amours and involuntary proposals of recent romance acknowledge little further law of morality than the instinct of an insect or the effervescence of a chemical mixture." The fact is, a certain class of late novelists make the prurient and the sensual their chief stock in trade. Shall we take such writers as these as the companions of our leisure or the solace of our weariness? "Will you go and gossip with your housemaid or your stable boy when you may talk with kings and queens?" says Emerson. And with the world's best books upon our shelves shall we descend to the companionship of "Esther Waters," the "Woman Who Did" or the off-color poems of the Yellow Book.

Especially we ask shall reputable papers encourage this class of publications by favorable notice of the same? H. T. G.

The Messiah.

The following communication was suggested by an interchange of opinion between an esteemed Christian friend and myself, which may perhaps interest some of the readers of your paper. He was surprised when I maintained that the idea of a personal Messiah is nowhere traceable in the Pentateuch, and forms therefore no part of the Torah, if by this term be understood the religious and moral injunctions as well as the laws, statutes and ordinances, that are usually considered to constitute the Mosaic legislation. In requesting me to state under what conditions and circumstances this doctrine originated or developed among the Hebrews, I expressed my diffidence in making the attempt, but referred to certain historical data and other considerations that occurred to me, which might facilitate the investigation. My friend remarked, which appears to me quite pertinent, that if the messianic idea really had a historical basis in the sense that national aspirations and political events gave rise to it, then it does not bear the character of a religious doctrine which like moral maxims and precepts are not contingent, but independent on their own right. He admitted that if this were the view of the Hebrews in general it would knock the ground from under the only feasible argument a Christian missionary can employ in approaching the Jews.

It is difficult to determine at which stage of Jewish history God's particular dealing with Israel became a settled opinion among the common people as well as their rulers, priests and prophets. Tradition as confirmed by the sacred records connects all the laws, statutes and ordinances which we find in the Pentateuch with the name of Moses. Josephus introduced the word theocracy to designate the form of government that Moses had provided for the Israelites. Although no more can be applied to this term, than the divine sanction claimed for the Mosaic legislation, yet on this theory are based all the civil and political institutions reported in the Pentateuch; and, consistently, the ethical and religious injunctions partake of the character of commandments. Even the formality of a compact between Jahveh and Israel is assumed. This is explicitly affirmed of the covenant made at Horeb (Deut. v. 2). In Leviticus it reads, "And the Lord said unto Moses, write thou these words, for after the tenor of these words, I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." (xxxiv. 27). In the spirit of such a relation between Jahveh and Israel "more reliance is placed on the binding force of the laws, than on the self-dictation of conscience."*

There is nothing peculiar in this, for all the systems of religion identify their doctrines and rules of human conduct with the will of God. The abuse to which this assumption is liable needs hardly to be mentioned. The priestly code, which includes besides the whole of Leviticus large portions of Exodus and Numbers, takes its divine sanction for granted. Although the canonical prophets, who in their exhortations are absolutely silent in regard to any written document in which this theory is laid down as an accepted fact, laid the greater stress on "mercy and not sacrifice," on justice rather than "vain oblations," yet they shared with the rest of the people the conviction of an intimate relation between Jahveh and Israel as a nation that owes him allegiance, and that violation of moral and religious precepts as well as the worship of a strange God involves the charge of unfaithfulness and rebellion. The principle of retributive justice held full sway in considering the terms of this relation—reward for obedience, chastisement for disobedience. In order to mitigate the sharpness of the law and make concession to human weakness, it was declared that God is long suffering and full of mercy to the repentent sinner. The divine promise to Israel for its submission may be summarized in the declaration, "I will give peace in the land and none shall molest you. I will be your God and ye shall be my people." (Lev. xxvi. 6, 13.) It is evident that such conditions of a mutual understanding could only be imagined when Israel had become a nation. This was certainly not the case in the wilderness, nor in the time of the Judges when the Israelites took possession of Canaan, for then "everyone did that which was right in his own eyes." (Jud. xviii. 6.) Not until the tribes had emerged from their anarchial condition and united under Saul and David could a truly national spirit arise. The best proof that the elaborate Mosaic legislation as we find it in the Pentateuch is a late production which rather fitted the period of the second temple, is afforded by the historical fact, that neither Saul nor David nor any of the kings of Judah and Israel attached any semblance of extraordinary importance and sanctity to the office of the High Priesthood, as it is demanded in the priestly code. The head priests were appointed and dismissed at the will of the monarch, and were treated in the manner of court-chaplains.*

The reform introduced under the King Josiah, which gave us the book of Deuteronomy, made very little impression in changing the worship of Jahveh that had been corrupted by elements of the Canaanitish cult; nor did the efforts of the canonical prophets prove of any immediate effect to infuse into the rulers, the priests and the multitude their pure monotheism and the superior excellence of moral conduct in contrast with an undue importance attached to mere externals. The prophets, like true patriots, took the keenest interest in public affairs and often evinced great political insight. This is the point which the foregoing sketch is intended to bring into prominence. When every one despaired of the future of Israel, those great preachers of repentance would assuage fears and forebodings, and did not fail in the midst of their bitter denunciations to speak of hope and trust in the power and mercy of their God. Even if but a "remnant" were kept alive it would again rise to establish the former glory and prosperity of Israel. After the people had been chastened by visitations they would again enjoy the providential care of Jahveh. The reign of David, that had become the popular ideal of national greatness, afforded the prophets a favorite figure of speech in depicting a glorious future. Under the aegis of a "root of Jesse" the land shall again bloom like a garden, and its people shall live in peace and safety. He will stand as an "ensign" of the nations, and shall be called "wonderful, the counsellor, a mighty God, the unchanging father, the prince of peace." (Is. ix.) The dawn of the Messianic idea is already foreshadowed in these highly wrought expressions. In aftertime, they were abundantly commented

*This is the view entertained by the Mishna Doctors. See Graetz. History of the Jews. Vol. IV. p. 237.

*Amaziah the priest of Bethel told Amos, "Prophesy not again any more at Bethel, for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court." (Amos vii. 13.)

on, and dogmas founded upon them. Political circumstances always tended to revive such expectations, especially during critical moments like the invasion of the Assyrians. Isaiah witnessed the reigns of some of the weakest kings of Judah and deplored their false policy. Jeremiah, in the midst of the death struggle of his countrymen with the Babylonian conqueror, still consoled them with the coming of the day when "Jahveh shall raise unto David a righteous branch" (xxiii). Micah took a more lofty view of the situation. He declared, "In the latter days, Jahveh shall reign on mount Zion from henceforth and forever . . . and many nations shall come and say, Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob and he will teach us his ways and we will walk in his paths." (iv. 2.) But the most pathetic of all prophetic exclamations is that of Habakuk, "Art thou not from everlasting, O Jahveh, my God, my Holy One. We shall not die . . . thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil." (i. 12, 13.) In the remarkable description of the "suffering servant" the Babylonian Isaiah closes with the national aspiration, "I will divide him a portion with the great, he shall divide the spoils with the strong, he shall see his seed and he shall prolong his days." (liii.) The Targum no less than the New Testament considers this chapter of Messianic import, but without reflecting on the difficulty of harmonizing the humble and self-sacrificing servant with the triumphant career in store for him. Though making no pretensions to elucidate the oracular and mystifying language of the text, it is still curious to notice how Jewish and Christian commentators sometimes change parts.

On the Jewish side, it has been contended that the "servant" must be taken in a spiritual sense, as representing Israel, suffering even unto death for the mission it has undertaken to spread religious truths. On the Christian side, the bruises and wounds of the servant are materialized, and his devotion unto death are taken in the literal sense of possessing an atoning virtue. The unknown prophet probably never dreamed of the tremendous significance that would be given to his meditations and the boldness of their expression. He does not even hesitate to greet the Persian Cyrus as the "shepherd" and "messiah." (Is. xlv.) Haggai paints a great catastrophe before "the desire of all nations shall come and will fill this house (temple) with glory." (ii. 6, 7.) We would much mistake the true intent of the prophetic expectations if we were to accept the literal purport of their speeches. Behind and above all their grand and cheering hopes stands God's righteousness, that will in the end realize the best wishes of mankind. Isaiah is clear on this point. He declares: "Zion shall be redeemed by righteousness." (l. 21.) It is not the righteousness, which is too good for this world, nor the painful observance of rites and ceremonies, but "to loose the bonds of the wicked, to undo the heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke. Is it not to deal bread to the hungry and that bringeth the poor that are cast out to thy house, when thou seest the naked that thou cover them, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" (lviii. 7.)

In some of the prophetic writings there is already an intimation of an eschatology that subsequently was interpreted to refer to the great day of judgment which shall precede the millennium. Isaiah in the strain of his oratorical fervor, anticipating for "Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy," is led to the climax of his burning speech by describing the doings of his Lord and God: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." (lxv. 17.) This poetical imagery was later on cast into an apocalyptical mould. In Joel we find similar expressions in connection with the "sifting" of Israel (iii. 14), and in Amos with that of Judah: "All the sinners of the people shall die by the sword; on that day I will raise the tabernacle of David that is fallen." (ix. 10.) Malachi, the last of the prophets, draws a frightful picture of that event. "Behold, I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me, and Jahveh, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his people. But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth, for he is like a refiner's fire and like boiling soap." (iii. 2.) The office assigned to Elias, the "forerunner," is here discerned by experts of prophetic literature. The portentous imagery of the prophets was well remembered by succeeding generations of Israel when tremendous calamities became imminent, particularly when Antiochus Epiphanes threatened the extinction of the Jewish state and religion, and when the Romans dealt the fatal blow. This is also the historical background of Esther and Judith.

The apocalyptical visions and dreams reported in the Book of David, "the prophet of the past," derive their interest from the state of the feelings that agitated the Hebrews preceding the Maccabean victories. Strange apparitions, no doubt, troubled many a patriot's night hours in witnessing events upon which the existence of Israel hung as upon a thread. In the darkest moments the perturbed state of mind would imagine that the end of the world had come and the day of judgment had arrived. It was then that reassurance and encouragement were needed, and, since the voices of the prophets were hushed,* that of an old venerated name was conjured up to strengthen the weak and to fire the patriot's heart. The Maccabean Psalms illustrate the terrible state of affairs in Palestine. "O God, the heathens have come in thy inheritance, thy holy temple have they defiled and have laid Jerusalem in heaps." (lxxix. 1) "They have said in their hearts, let us destroy them altogether; they have burned up all the synagogues of God (moade-el) in the land." (lxxiv. 7). The term messiah seems to have been current in the time of the author of Daniel, but his enigmatical style of writing conveys no satisfactory information in regard to the definite meaning he attached to it. In one place he speaks of the *Messiah Nagid*,—the messiah, the prince who was to punish.† There are indications in Daniel of novel religious notions that were probably imported, especially the doctrine of the resurrection and the Persian angelology. Michæl had become the tutelary angel of Israel. In Tobit we find a full-fledged belief in demons. In the visions of Daniel, we read of "one like the son of man to come with the clouds." It is doubtful whether phantasms of this kind found favor among sober people in Jerusalem; but the doctrine of a final judgment, the reign of the saints and the inauguration of a kingdom of heaven may have counted many believers. The Judaeo-Hellenic literature in the last centuries B. C. repeats such ideas with great amplification according to the taste of each writer. The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon tells of the resurrected dead that shall possess the earth and judge many nations, and that then God shall reign forever. The kingdom of heaven is foretold in the Sybellines. A king will arise and make war upon all the nations of the earth. There will be great tumult and consternation, but he shall establish universal peace. All nations will then acknowledge the true God. In the Book of Henoch is a description of the judgment of God in "the lovely land." The rebellious angels shall be thrown into hellfire and a new Jerusalem come down from heaven to take the place of the old city; a white lamb shall then appear (the Messiah) and convert the nations. God shall then reign alone and a scion of David will do his will.* The eschatology in the New Testament is almost facsimile of some of these reveries. "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of war. See that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nations shall rise against nations and kingdoms against kingdoms . . . and many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many, but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. . . . When ye therefore shall see the abomination of the desolation spoken of by Daniel, the prophet (who so readeth, let him understand), then let them which are in Jerusalem flee to the mountains. Neither let him which is in the field turn back and take his clothes. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." (Matt. xxiv. 6-21). The local coloring of this description is unmistakable. The abomination of desolation (*shikuss*) refers to the eagles and standards the Roman governors planted in the temple; the false prophets allude to the false messiahs, who, according to Josephus, arose during the war with the Romans; and the warning in regard to the Sabbath could only be addressed to pious Jews. It could make no difference to the Roman procurators whether the rebel be a rude Galilean guerrilla chief, like John of Giscola, or a gentle Nazarene, "for the common people gladly heard him"—they were all led to the cross. Probably if the gospels of the Ebionites and of the Nazarites had been preserved we would not find in them the accusation which casts the infamy of the death of Jesus on the Jews, in order to please the numerous and influential converts throughout the Roman world. The New Testament affords an interesting study of the messianic ideas that were afloat in Palestine. The rise of Christianity, its slow and silent beginnings, is obscure; but is it improbable that the intolerable Roman yoke, which hurt the Judeans in the sorest part, set to work a train of reflection in a few ardent spirits, on the search for some satisfactory interpretation of the profound events that passed before their eyes, and stirred their hearts to the utmost? It is not only possible, but highly probable, that the calamities they witnessed under the villainous Roman procurators appeared to their anxious vision the signs of tribulation that were to herald the Kingdom of God and the coming of a deliverer who was to establish a new order of

*See Ps. lxxiv. 9; also the complaint that signs are no more seen.

†It may be mentioned here, that messiah was the title applied to the king and high priest. The ceremony of anointing with oil rendered them sacred and inviolable in person. The Psalmist says, "touch not my anointed." The word *mishiach* is the passive participle of the verb *moshach*, to anoint, and is used as an adjective. As a deterographical word it stands for either king or high priest. In Hannah's prayer (I Sam. ii. 10) the word messiah occurs, but the lyric poetry in the style of the Psalms put into the mouth of a plain countrywoman, as well as its contents, stands in no connection with the situation.

*Quoted from Schurer. History of the Jewish people. He puts the date of the book not later than the second century B. C.

things, which the prophets had foretold. That the disciples believed in the messiahship of Jesus presupposes that he believed it himself. He had won their hearts and impregnated them with his own faith. It may fairly be assumed that he opened to them his inmost thoughts, and that they understood his plain talk and his parables better than the subtle apostle of the gentiles and the sentimental author of the fourth gospel. If these suggestioms may amount to very little, this cannot be said of the testimony in strict keeping with the New Testament. It is related in the Acts of the Apostles (i. 3,7) that when Jesus appeared to his disciples he spoke of "things of the Kingdom of God." When they asked him, "O Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" he replied, "It is not for you to know the time and the s ason." Such would be the answer of the historical Jesus, for it is genuinely Jewish.

The intensity of the messianic hope, which never left the Jews, that entered into their daily prayers and of which their sages had many curious and bright things to say, is but the measure of the terrible ordeal they underwent during centuries of horror and death. Why should any one have grudged them this burning wish that was wrung out of their hearts' blood and steadied their quivering lips when they vainly plead for justice and pity? They would have been less than human had they not warmed their souls with the comforting words the wisest and best of their people uttered in days of yore. "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." The twentieth century is now approaching, and there has been neither the coming of the messiah nor the second coming of Christ. Although the world has been vastly benefitted by the lives of patriots and martyrs, yet in the meantime mankind is going on to work out its salvation by ordinary means.—Dr. A. B. Arnold, *in the Reform Advocate.*

The largest publishing business in this country is carried on by the government itself About 1,000,000 books are turned out annually and also, for the most of the year, the largest and stupidest daily paper in the world, known as the Congressional Record. Some of the books are creditable specimens, but as a rule the need of a competent editor is their leading characteristic.

From estimates in the archives of the Civic Federation, according to *The Ram's Horn*, Chicago has 60,000 opium eaters, 40,000 homeless women, 30,000 professional politicians, 10,000 gamblers, 60,000 saloon and den habitues, 7,000 saloon keepers, 28,000 bar assistants, 2,500 prisoners, 10,000 thieves and 1,900 paupers. The estimates do not commend themselves to our judgment as very probable; but perhaps they are as near the truth as any mere estimate can be.

Trinty Church, New York, probably the wealthiest religious corporation in the world, carried up to the court of appeals an order of the board of health compelling it to put water on each floor of certain tenement houses owned by it. Its defense was that the houses were not built as tenement houses, and were not tenement houses within the statute, but old fashioned houses let out in floors to families, who had all the privilege of access to hydrants in the back yard from which they could draw their water on winter mornings. In one house there are three families, and in the other six. The court dismissed the church's appeal.

The Word of the Spirit.

"Get thee up into the high mountain; lift up thy voice with strength; be not afraid!"

Ideals.

A SERMON PREACHED AT THE WARE UNITARIAN CHURCH BY REV. V. E. SOUTHWORTH.

Be perfect as God is perfect.

MATT. v. 48.

"Everything in the real world is imperfect, but there exist ideals."

LESTER F. WARD.

"Unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how poor a thing is man."

SAMUEL DANIEL.

This has been appropriately called a scientific age. With Darwin and Wallace for our leaders, and Herbert Spencer for our teacher, we have come to feel a certain sense of pride in our mastery of the meaning of the world. There is no doubt about it, there has been a very great gain in knowledge of the tendencies and laws of nature within the last half century. But of all the lessons that these fifty years of scientific investigation have taught us, not one is of more importance than the great lesson that we have many things yet to learn.

The highest knowledge is to know how many things there are yet to be known. We have only begun to read the riddle of the universe, and until we know very much more than we think we know we will not be in position to assert positively that we really know anything. Scientific investigation is all the time becoming more thorough and exhaustive, and at the same time it is rendered more and more evident that so far, at least, we have only attained a very slight and superficial acquaintance with the universe. A few facts here and there have been verified, and from these facts it seems probable that things are working according to certain great principles.

I. We discern, for example, a law of progress permeating all things.

Things are not made outright. They come to be. They are the gradual product of certain causes working under certain conditions. In other words no carpenter or stonemason has ever with tools and stuff put things together.

Topsy in the play solved the problem of the origin of things when she affirmed "I'se growed." "Things growed." One of the few facts about the truth of which we may feel a tolerable degree of certainty is that nature—the inorganic, the organic and the human world,—is not the manufacture of an external agent or agency, but is the gradual outgrowth of resident forces. On all sides we see things in process of development. From what they are, becoming something else. The inorganic coming to be organic. The rock becoming vegetable; the vegetable becoming animal; the animal becoming man; man becoming ever more of a man.

So far back as we can trace the records there has been only a constant repetition of this process. It was growth and outgrowth a million years ago; it is growth and outgrowth today; the probabilities are that nature will never change her tactics. On some vastly higher plane it will be growth and outgrowth forever.

This is what Emerson calls "the method of nature." There is somehow a perpetual impulse at the heart of things whereby "the gases gather to the solid firmament; (whereby) the chemic lump arrives at the plant and grows; arrives at the quadruped and walks; arrives at man and thinks."

Out of the one emanates the other. The chemical substratum upholds the vegetable, above that rises the animal, from which in turn emerges the human. Out of the gregarious instincts of animals there have developed the sympathies of man. Out of these human sympathies arose in turn the necessities of social communion. And so in the most inevitably natural way out of the experience of the advantages to be derived from social communion there gradually grew up in the mind of man a sense of his primary obligation to his fellowmen, or what we name "Duty."

We cannot measure the immense interval by which our moral consciousness is separated from "the far-off trilobite." But we have every reason to believe that "by gradual modification and development" from these first crude forms of life our moral consciousness has at length emerged.

II. It is impossible for man to divorce himself from the general scheme of nature. As Emerson puts it, "An individual man is a fruit which it cost all the foregoing ages to form and ripen. Of all the past ages, the present hour and circumstance is the cumulative result." The world, as it now is, is a more or less direct inheritance from all that the world has ever been. What has made the difference?

How are we to account for this perpetual transformation of cosmic dust into moral man?

Science is far too modest to attempt an answer to this vital question. Evidence points very strongly to the existence of a supreme life of which every atom of nature is a portion and visible manifestation. Especially does man in his highest moral experience feel himself a conscious participant in a universal life. It is one of the chief features in human nature that in our best moods we are aware of some impulse within us by which we are being continually urged forward. We are visited by visions of what ought to be. We are haunted by the ideal. This same spirit of progress by whose silent operation the advancement of the world has so far been forwarded, is still at work in human nature. As Wordsworth says:

"There's not a man
That lives, who hath not known his Godlike hours,
And feels not what an empire we inherit
As natural beings in the strength of nature!"

From the first we seem to be born into this world each one of us impregnated with a desire for life. The more we live and the more we reflect upon the experience of life, the stronger becomes our consciousness of the presence of a deep and insatiable thirst for the ideal. What is cannot adequately gratify our innate longings. There is ever and anon a vision of what ought to be. We cannot rest content with things as they are. The quiet of our separate life is broken up by the clamorous invasion of a horde of new hopes, aspirations and desires.

The best is not yet. Ahead of us there are always opening up new possibilities and larger opportunities. That same principle of progress, which has been dominant in the universe always, still asserts itself with authority in the conscience of man. Do what we will, we can never quite rid ourselves of these haunting ideals. So long as men are manly, this altogether natural tendency to be dissatisfied with what is, and to strive for what ought to be, will assert itself.

Perfect and permanent satisfaction can nowhere be found. So long as the human remains human it will be the victim of incessant desire. New ideas will awaken nobler sentiments—larger experience and broader culture will render our present limitations unbearable. Only the most ignorant are the least ambitious. Only the stupid and brutal are insensible to the pressure of pure desire.

In proportion as we let the mind act, in

proportion as we surrender ourselves to the guidance of rational impulses, just in that measure are we urged on by this resistless spirit of unrest.

It is a psychological principle that imagination cannot transcend experience. But it is no less true that experience is constantly producing fresh material for the imagination to work upon. If we widen our experience, we widen our desires. The more our life expands the more imperative becomes our craving for a life of still larger dimensions.

The fact is our living interests become intensified in proportion as we seek their fulfilment. If we are really in earnest, life will never grow threadbare. If we give free rein to what is best in our nature, we shall never exhaust our resources. If we persist and are patient in the cultivation of our powers of thought, there will be always enough to think about. If we have a genuine desire to learn, there can be no limit to our learning.

In every department of our being this is the rule. He who wisely cultivates his powers of admiration and love, can go on admiring and loving to all eternity, and doubtless there will still remain much to admire and love. So too with our attempts to realize in our life an ideal of moral rectitude. If we really want to be good, we can never be good enough. With every advance to higher life, some more worthy possibility presents itself. When the present ideal is realized, it affords us excellent foothold from which to climb to grander moral attainments.

Surely, friends, if man is man, if the soul of things can be trusted, there is "no finite goal to man's rational, moral or æsthetic pilgrimage."

"Everything in the real world is imperfect, but there exist ideals." The imperfections of the real world would drive us into hopeless despair were it not for the enthusiasm that is born of the ideal. Who of us could face the future with the consciousness of our imperfections were it not for this buoyancy and hope born of the ideal? It is just this expectation of the nobler life that exhilarates and strengthens us for further effort.

This is what life means—opportunity for improvement. Aside from this, of what use is it to be born? If day by day and year by year we cannot render actual some higher ideal, life is robbed of its meaning.

> "Unless above himself he can
> Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!"

Man is man only in order that he may become more of a man. If this is not true, our human life is the most illusive of all illusions; the most deceptive of all deceptions.

If there is a man or a woman who can live on week in and week out without being discontented with his or her imperfections, without being fretted and irritated by the limitations of the present life, you may be sure that such a person has not escaped very far from his or her brute ancestry.

It is not a human life unless it is moved upon and urged ahead by this resistless spirit of unrest. Be very sure, my friend, if you can live content with what you are, if you are satisfied with your present attainments, there is no value in your life. It is worthless to yourself and to all concerned.

III. It is just this ceaseless effort to reach some higher ideal, this struggle for a fuller life that has been "the driving-wheel of all cosmical, biological and historical development." Without this the star-mist would be star-mist still; the chemic lump would be chemic lump still. Always this tendency of things to become other and better things has been at work.

The pre-organic is not at rest in its disorganized state. The crystal frets and fumes until its elements help to make possible the protoplasmic basis of a higher life. From the dawn of the life germ there was no rest until out of this lower insentient life there emerged a higher sentient mode of life. When the first simple forms of a nervous organism appeared, it was simply the removal of this incessant struggle from a lower to a loftier plane. By imperceptible degrees, through unnumbered ages of effort, from nervous force there at length emerged a higher mental force.

Little by little by a persistent exercise of its proper functions mind began to dominate all else. And in the human being we find that this spirit of progress is now concentrating all its activities upon the still greater development of the intellectual, æsthetic and moral life of man.

This is our place in life. We are the conscious participants in the universal effort for improvement. We may, if we will, join forces with the infinite life of all in this age-long task. We may identify our life with the supreme life. We may of our free choice work together with the infinite past in its effort to achieve the highest and best throughout an infinite future.

How can we do this?

By doing our best to make the best of ourselves. By living each day in the radiant light of some o'er-mastering ideal. By setting before us some definite task. By enlarging our range of intellectual vision. By putting ourselves into sympathetic touch with the highest achievements of the best minds.

We must learn to think; learn to feel; learn to admire; learn to love. The aim of each separate human life should be to elevate, purify, and enrich each his own individuality.

Let it be known everywhere that no man is as much of a man as all men ought to be. No man has made so much of himself as all men ought to make of themselves.

> "Unless above himself he can
> Erect himself, how mean a thing is man!"
>
> "Oh, what has the future in store for me,—
> The future so dark and deep?
> What meanings inhabit its mystery?
> What sounds does its silence keep?
> How long shall my heart its heart-beats tell?
> Shall my days my dreams destroy?
> Shall seasons of peace my sorrows quell,
> Or shall sorrows conquer joy?
> And what of the future, with this life o'er?
> Shall I laugh or shall I weep?
> Is death but to open a heavenly door
> Or is it eternal sleep?
> I cannot answer. In vain I try
> The things of time to foresee!
> What folly then to prophesy
> The events of eternity!
> But of one thing, at least, amid all I am sure,
> The one thing that's constant in change,—
> That matter and force must forever endure
> In their limitless, endless range.
> And, further, of this I am certain, too:
> That the chiefest thing on earth—
> Which shall rule in the race while the true is the true—
> Is the might of human worth.
> In the spirit of man lies the spirit of good;
> In his soul do the seraphim sing;
> In the mind of man lies the masterhood:
> Humanity is king."

Senator Coon's Township Woman Suffrage bill came up in the Illinois Senate again Wednesday, but had to be postponed to next week on account of the absence of some of its friends. It is postponed too much and will hardly pass.

Sermon Extract.

HUMANITARIAN RELIGION.

There recently appeared in two Freeport papers the following: "The effort to establish a Liberal church in Freeport on a basis so broad that anybody who possesses a good moral character, irrespective of belief, may become a member, to us is a miserable travesty on the Christian religion, and scarcely worth a passing remark." But the following concession is generously made: "Its merit is its humanitarianism, and that is its only virtue."

In answer to all this let us see how the Apostle James defines Biblical religion: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." The essence of this is only humanitarianism and pure moral life. The apostle says that this is a royal law and that one who keeps it does well. The psalmist says that the man of clean hands and a pure heart shall stand in God's holy place. Why is he not qualified, then, to enter a church as a member? What place has a love of humanity in the Bible? Is this not the chief place? "God so loved the world," is John's phrase. This is the first example of humanitarianism, pure and simple. Is it a small virtue? Paul said: "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." And Jesus said: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye love one another." All this is humanitarianism. Isaiah teaches the same. On the two commandments of love to God and love to man hang all the law and the prophets. Then why should we add or ask anything more? Has the Christian religion become, in the course of time, something different from Peter's and the psalmist's idea of it? Peter said: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." Has something been subsequently added to this?

Abraham Lincoln said of any church that would inscribe over its altars, as the sole condition of membership, love of God and love of man, "That church will I join with all my heart and all my soul." But the churches in Lincoln's time all asked more. They ask more now. But the prophet Micah expressly tells us all that God requires: "And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." That is pure humanitarianism again, for God's sake. But the orthodox churches call this "mere morality." To organize liberal churches on such a basis, it is said, "irrespective of belief, is to us a miserable travesty on the Christian religion, and scarcely worth a passing remark." Well, then, if this is dangerous, is not the Scripture which teaches the sufficiency of this basis also dangerous and defective?

Now we come to the "belief" which we are informed is necessarily required in order to right membership in the church. And here is where the Biblical system of religion and the orthodox system of religion part company forever. It is charged that liberal religion is silent on the atonement. This is a great mistake. It is not. Liberal religion teaches simply a totally different view of the atonement. With liberal religion it is at-one-ment,—getting into harmony with God and all pure laws. It is not a sacrificial bearing by one person of the penalty due another person for his sins, so that the latter may go free of all penalty. This is an impossibility.

Every person must bear his own sin, and stand on his own merits. Ezekiel says, "The soul that sinneth it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." "As I live, saith the Lord, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge,'" that is, the fathers have sinned and the children are held responsible. But the current theory of the atonement is the exact opposite of all this, and teaches that Adam's sons to the remotest generation are responsible for his sin. Not only this, but that another person, Jesus, can and does, in the case of all conversions, bear their penalty for them in their place. This violates all the principles of reason and justice not any more than it does the whole doctrine of the Bible. The current doctrine of the atonement was derived, not from the Bible, but from the pagan and primitive law called the law of blood-revenge, or revenge by blood-relatives for offenses against relatives, a law which recognized the principle of the substitution of the innocent in the place of the guilty and also the commutation of penalties.

The true meaning of the blood of sacrifice at the altar and the blood of Jesus was, according to the Hebrew belief, that it was the vehicle in which dwelt and which bore a pure soul or life. When it was offered to God as a symbol in sacrifice, therefore, the meaning was that a pure, obedient, filial soul was offered to him by his child. It meant the return of the child to holiness and obedience. So the atonement meant a personal at-one-ment. It meant the sinful child returning to a loyal life. The sinner and the Father were made at one. We believe that it is the great duty, destiny and blessing of man to grow to be at one more and more, not only with the Father's pure heart, but with all his laws, facts and truths, as they bear on our physical, mental, moral and spiritual natures, till these laws and truths live in us, and bloom in us unto healthy, noble, pure, everlasting life.

The orthodox theology at this point is neither Judaic nor Christian. It is demonstrably pagan and has no Biblical right to call itself Christian. It is an error and a mistake so to call it.

Rev. A. N. Alcott.

Representative Black has introduced into the Illinois House of Representatives a local option bill which provides for a county vote for or against saloons in counties having no towns of over 5,000. This would include about 60 counties.

The effort of George Peabody to provide better dwellings for the poor of London has met with more success than was thought possible in his day. The fund he gave now amounts to $5,500,000. Twenty thousand persons live in the 11,300 rooms that are built according to his plans, and the average rental of a room is 54 cents a week. That Mr. Peabody had a singularly practical mind is proved by the result of all his benefactions.

The consolidation of the great Astor and Lenox libraries with the Tilden trust fund is said to have been arranged. The combined endowments will have a fund exceeding $8,000,000, and the combined library a collection of 450,000 volumes, besides a large collection of rare and valuable pamphlets. The new library will be known as the "Public Library of the City of New York—Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations."

The Home

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Helps to High Living.

Sun.—Every man is cherishing that inmost and indestructible life which death cannot touch.

Mon.—In this world mind or character exerts an all-powerful sway.

Tues.—Ever and everywhere body is the creation of life.

Wed.—What are heaven and hell but man opened?

Thurs.—Death is shutting the door; but then another opens higher upward.

Fri.—Pain always results from the perversion of contrivances for pleasure.

Sat.—All living forms, natural or spiritual, are the outgrowth of an internal principle, seeking to shape itself for the functions it has to perform. —*Edward H. Sears.*

The Best Drinking Place.

In a pleasant day in the early fall
A stranger rode into town,
And, stopping his horse in the public square,
Glanced this way and that with a frown;
For the place that he sought he could not find
(Saloons had been banished that year),
So he called to a lad who passed that way,
And said to him: "Sonny, come here,—

"Here's a nickel for you to show me the way
To the best drinking place you know."
"All right!" he answered,—a quick-witted youth:
"Just turn up the street, sir, and go
Till you come to another; turn right again,
And you'll see quite plainly," said John.

So, thanking the lad, the stranger rode off,
And John gave a hop, skip and jump,
For back came the stranger within a trice,
Brought up at the old town pump.
"Here you are, sir," said John with a smile,
"The best 'drinking place' to be found.
Take a drink, sir, it's free, and you're welcome too,
It's good for your health, I'll be bound."

He took the glass in a good-natured way,
And drank of the water clear.
Then said: "'Tis an excellent drink, I'm sure,
The best I've had for a year."
So saying he tossed the lad a coin:
"This lesson is worth that to me.
Keep on playing your temperance joke,
'Twill make the world better," said he.

—*M. L. W., in Every Other Sunday.*

Elsie's Souvenirs.

A TRUE STORY.

It was the homeward trip of the last excursion of the season, and every available seat was occupied, when an old gentleman, with long, white locks around his shoulders, entered a car, and looked helplessly about him for a seat. But every one knows just how tired an excursionist is, and just how restful the soft velvet cushions seem after a day of such enthusiastic exercise.

It was so in this case, and none of the passengers seemed to give a thought to the poor old man as they laughed and chattered, and arranged their flowers and ferns in fanciful designs, until one young lady, near the end of the car, said carelessly, "Look at that old gentleman; he has no seat."

"Why, no!" said her young companion. "it is too bad."

"Then why didn't he hurry up?" said the other.

"Why, don't you see, he is old and feeble? He could not walk so fast as the rest of us."

"I wonder what he is going to do with his bundle of sticks?"

"Use them for firewood, perhaps. See how his hands shake! I have a notion to give him my seat."

"And let him sit here, beside me?"

"To be sure. But I will stand near."

"I think you are real mean."

"Yes, awfully, if I let that poor old man stand up all the way to Camden."

Then, rising quickly, she said, "Here is a seat, sir."

"But that is your seat," quavered a tremulous voice.

"That doesn't matter. You need it worse than I."

"Well, God bless you, dear child; for I don't think I could keep up much longer. I never was so tired in my life. It was just a little too much for me, getting these souvenirs." And as he sank down in the seat he bestowed a loving glance on the bundle of sticks.

"What are they, sir?" asked Elsie.

"Varieties of the different woods that grow at Wildwood. The others have flowers, but they are too perishable for me. I would rather have something I can keep."

Elsie and her companion thought the old gentleman very eccentric; but, as the lunch-basket was sought, the very nicest piece of cake was handed over, and the stranger seemed to enjoy every crumb.

"There, I feel better now," he said. "You are very thoughtful, and if you will give me your name and address, I will send you some of my souvenirs."

Madge laughed scornfully, but Elsie wrote her name on a card, and handed it over to the old gentleman.

Just three days later, the postman rang the bell at Elsie's mother's door, and put in her hand a strange looking package.

What could it be? Elsie tore away the wrappings hastily, and then squealed with delight.

"Why, what is the matter?" inquired her mother.

"Souvenirs from the dear old gentleman on the cars that I was telling you about," laughed Elsie, very happy indeed.

"What are they?"

"Such beauties, made out of that bundle of sticks he carried, I do believe. Little urns and cups and goblets, and every kind of wood named on the bottom of the article. See, this one is marked 'holly'; this, 'oak'; this, 'cherry'; and, well, I declare, if here is not one marked 'huckleberry'! who would ever have thought he could have made such a cute little goblet out of such a black-looking stick? Look, mamma; why there are a dozen pieces!"

"They are very beautiful, my child; but were no words sent with them?"

"Only these: 'To the dear young lady who befriended an old fellow on the cars.'"

"Kindness always pays," said her mother.

"Yes, to be sure; but I never thought of receiving a reward for doing such a very little thing."

"Then the surprise is all the sweeter."

Elsie is a married woman now, but she still cherishes her Wildwood souvenirs among her choicest treasures.

—*S. S. Times.*

In Prussia the Roman Catholic Church seems to retain its vitality. In 1872 there were in the kingdom 914 conventual establishments, with 8,795 members; three years later, in consequence of the repressive legislation of the "May laws," over a third of the institutions were dissolved, but in 1893 we find 1,215 establishments, with 14,044 monks and nuns.

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The Liberal Field.

Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion.

The Western Unitarian Conference.

There are two questions often asked the secretary of the Western Conference. On the one hand, churches that have a regular minister sometimes inquire why the secretary does not visit them. He has uniformly answered such inquiries by saying that he regards it as his duty to visit not the churches that have ministers, but those that are without them, and especially those that are without regular services. "They that are whole need not a physician." It would be far easier and pleasanter to make a tour of all the churches connected with the Conference, but in that case it would be impossible to visit each church more than once a year. Instead of doing this, the secretary has steadily declined to go where there is a settled minister as long as there is any unsupplied church which desires his services. Only when the settled minister is unable to preach, by reason of sickness or absence, has the secretary felt it his duty to go.

On the other hand, he is often asked, on what terms he can come. He has always answered this question by saying that he has no terms. If the church needs him, he regards it as his duty to go. If the church needing him feels that it can contribute anything towards the support of the Western Conference, he is glad to receive it; and the more the church can contribute, the more glad he will be to receive it. But the idea that the church needing him must pay his traveling expenses, is one that he has never entertained; because in that case the Chicago churches would get his services for nothing and the Illinois churches for next to nothing, while the remoter churches would have to pay heavily. In this way churches that needed help most would often be entirely debarred from getting it. Thus it may seem his duty to visit four or five times some struggling society that may not be able to contribute more than ten dollars to the Conference, while the church contributing two or three hundred dollars is left entirely unvisited. We trust, therefore, that the churches wishing to help establish truth, righteousness and love in the world, will not withhold their contributions simply because the secretary has not visited them.

Chicago, Ill.

We see by the daily papers that the trustees of Central Church announced have a plan for carrying on missionary work at home. They decided to raise a large fund,—how large was not stated, but just as much as was necessary,—to do missionary work in their own way. The first thing Central Church will do is to create ten annual scholarships of $100 each for young men. These are to be given for proficiency in Latin and Greek, as a memorial to the lamented Professor Swing, who was especially fond of those studies. It is the desire of the congregation that poor boys compete for these scholarships and use the money toward securing a college education. The young contestants need not be of families belonging to the congregation. The competition is open to all, and examinations will be conducted under the direction of the board of trustees of Central Church.

The next thing the congregation will undertake is the founding of twenty-five Sunday-schools in the northwest. These will be supported entirely by Central Church. All the books, such as Bibles, testaments, singing books, church literature and everything else needed in a model Sunday school, will be supplied from Chicago. The location of these schools and their management will be under the direction of Rev. Mr. Ensign, of the American Sunday School Union. Mr. Ensign will select the superintendents and direct the work from Chicago, occasionally visiting the schools to see how they are getting along. The congregation expects good work from the schools, the trustees being so confident that they will prove successful that arrangements are already in progress for starting a second circuit of twenty-five. The entire fifty schools will probably be opened before the close of the year.

The present intention is to establish these missionary outposts in the northwest where denominational congregations are too weak to build churches, and where Sunday-schools are unknown.

REV. L. J. DINSMORE, of the Universalist Church of Our Father, has been appointed to represent the Universalist interests in Illinois.

ALL SOULS CHURCH:—This evening (Thursday, March 21), at 8 o'clock, the Kelso School of Musical and Dramatic Art will give a dramatic and musical entertainment at the church for the benefit of the Kindergarten Fund. The two-act comedy "Rice Pudding" will be played; scene from Dickens' "Old Curiosity Shop" will be presented; and the Tannhauser overture, from Wagner, and selections from Brahms, Dreyschock and Winawski will be given. The price of admission is but twenty-five cents, and from personal observation we are able to assure our readers that the performances of the students of this school reflect very great credit upon their teacher, Mrs. May Donnally Kelso, as well as upon their own faithful work. Miss Mary Karr's rendering of the scene between Dick Swiveller and "The Marchioness" is alone worth putting one's self to no little inconvenience to see and hear. S.

Carthage, Mo.

The people here are hoping to have the Missouri Valley Conference meet with them the last of April.

Freeport, Ill.

Our service last Sunday evening was one of the most satisfactory we have yet held.

A large audience was present, and it was earnest, interested and even enthusiastic. The collection was unusually large. At the close of the service, at least seventy-five people came forward to receive the sample copies of THE NEW UNITY and *The Non-Sectarian*. After distributing 20 copies of the former, and 50 of the latter, I had not half enough to go around. Another supply of each has been sent for, for the next service.

The discourse was a reply to the Rev. H. A. Ott's objections to the organization of a Liberal church in Freeport. An abstract will be found in another column. This is the second time the Liberal Congress work has been publicly assailed here. Mr. Ott is pastor of the English Lutheran church. The Rev. N. O. Freeman, who preached against our movement here a few weeks ago, and who was at that time replied to, is pastor of the Methodist church. The answers to these brethren have been made as fraternal, courteous and kind as possible. Rev. E. P. Hill, of the Presbyterian church, last Sunday morning gave us the advantage of his objections to our work. On my return here two weeks hence, his points will be considered. One thing seems to be certain, and that is that Freeport is becoming very much interested in our Congress work. It is the universal topic of conversation. With the aid of our orthodox brethren, its prospects seem to improve each week. I have never seen a town more thoroughly stirred up on the subject of religion, or more promisingly so for the Liberal cause. There are several hundred people already who regard its advent here as a benediction, and they are among the best people in the city. It would seem as if steady, even, earnest work here will eventuate in a prosperous, vigorous liberal church. All classes of liberals have become interested in it, and many people from orthodox churches attend, and are in sympathy with us, and are even supporting us. Dr. Thomas Kerr preaches here next Sunday evening, and Rev. James Gorton the following Sunday evening. A. N. ALCOTT.

Keokuk, Ia.

Rev. W. A. Pratt declines the call to Wausaw, Wisconsin, and remains in Keokuk. He expects to spend the summer in London and on the continent, going as far south as Rome and possibly Athens; will sail about June 1st.

Madison, Wis.

On the last Sunday in February, in the evening, the Unitarian church was taxed beyond its capacity by the audience that gathered to hear Mr. Simonds in the lecture, given by special request, on "Robert Ingersoll's Power With the People." Seats were placed in every nook and corner of the building, even the platform and choir enclosure being occupied by those who failed to find room elsewhere, while more than a hundred people left the building, unable to find even standing room. Excellent music was provided

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Nothing could have been more fair than Mr. Simonds' treatment of his subject. He said Ingersoll was a fact, a force, to be weighed and measured. He spoke of his great gift of oratory, his true mastery of eloquence, and of his having done more than any one man toward destroying some of the more cruel beliefs in everlasting torture. But he accused the great agnostic of failing to bring to his treatment of the Bible the same candor, the same fairness, with which he handled Shakespeare. The speaker did not believe himself in an infallible book, any more than he believed in an infallible man, but he did believe the Bible to be the world's best book. So that while Ingersoll's power lay in his eloquence, and in the fact of his saying some things the world was ready to hear, he was a failure as a critic. Then the speaker made a noble, eloquent and truly masterly plea for the beauty and grandeur of some of the books of the Bible that Ingersoll had maligned. He showed how Ingersoll had pointed out the evils that had attended the Christian religion without showing all it had done for civilization, progress and liberty. He called special attention to Ingersoll's last lecture on the Bible, a printed copy of which he held in his hand, and declared some of its extravagant utterances to be devoid of the smallest grain of common sense. Between atheism and fanaticism, the speaker declared, lay the large, broad domain of thought that shall save the world.

New York, N. Y.

Rev. Thomas Dixon, Jr., the somewhat sensational and erratic Baptist minister of this city, has announced his determination to sever his connection with his present church and found a new one on a broad and popular platform. He says there will be but one creed in his church,—"Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ." He thinks it "a more important part of his life work to lift men out of the ditch than to spend his time in making a few men Baptists." His resignation is said to have been due to the objection of the more conservative members of the congregation to his preaching. The only wonder is that objections have not been raised before, since he asserted two years ago in his lectures on Ingersoll that the essence of Christianity was not in any theological belief, but in love to God and love to man.

San Francisco, Cal.

An informal ministerial club, consisting of the Unitarian ministers around the Bay of San Francisco, holds a semi-monthly session at the headquarters. All the ministers except one attended the two sessions held during the past month. Rev. Dr. Stebbins presided. Nine clergymen were present. The special topics for discussion were, first: "The Duty of the Unitarian Churches with Regard to the Uprising of the Citizens of San Francisco Against the Corruption in Municipal and Police Circles in that City." A resolution, offered by Rev. L. W. Sprague, was passed, and delegates were appointed to the Civic Federation. Another question of importance was the removal of the headquarters, which was happily accomplished. One session was devoted to a consideration of the question of "Divorce," now a burning issue in San Francisco.

Sterling, Ill.

Rev. Dr. Hoffman has withdrawn from his work here, and Rev. Seward Baker, a graduate of the last class in Meadville, has come to take up the work. A mid-week missionary meeting is being planned to increase the courage and enthusiasm of the society.

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Tacoma, Wash

The March bulletin of the Free Church of this city, announces a series of sermons on "Jesus and his Relation to Modern Life." The first takes up the sources of information about Jesus; the second, his birth and childhood; the third, his education. On March 31st, Rev. J. H. Acton, the newly installed minister of Seattle, will exchange with Mr. Martin. A course of "Lecture Talks on Evolution" are also being delivered at the vestry of the First Free Church on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. The James Freeman Clarke Fraternity connected with this church is forming a class for the study of evolution in connection with these lectures.

Topeka, Kans.

The March calendar of this church announces the following subjects: "The Religion of Jesus"; "The Coming Religion"; "Speak to the Children of Israel That They Go Forward"; God in Nature and God in Man"; "Out of the Darkness Hath the Light Shined." The adult class of the Sunday school is studying this month, the Baptists, the Spiritualists, the Friends, and the Salvation Army, with believers in each of these different denominations to lead the sessions.

Whitewater, Wis.

The Chicago *Universalist* publishes the following from the Universalist Committee of Fellowship of Wisconsin:

"Fellowship is herewith withdrawn from Rev. J. F. Schindler on the charge of ministerial misconduct."

Luverne, Minn.

Rev. Mary A. Safford, of Sioux City, recently spoke at a memorial service here in honor of Mr. W. W. Snook. She also preached for the Unitarian Society, which keeps up its Sunday School and other organizations although without a pastor at present.

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The Sunday School.

The World Is Saved by the Breath of the School Children.

The Annual Sunday School Conference.

At the meeting of the Western Unitarian Conference in May, it is proposed to have a whole day devoted to the Sunday school. Our meetings in the past have been too brief and too crowded with business and papers to give any time for discussion. This year we shall try to have few papers and plenty of discussion. We expect to take up, as the chief topic, the teaching of the younger portion of the school, and especially the possibility of using nature studies for that purpose more than we do now. If nature is really divine, if the world is a revelation of the Infinite, then it ought to be possible to lift some little corner of the veil and show that divinity to our little ones. How to do it best is the difficult question we wish to discuss next May. Will not all who have seen the possibility of doing this noble work, join with our society in trying to arrange some course of study, with illustrated weekly leaflets, that will interest, instruct and inspire the younger scholars? Let all the schools send delegates to this conference meeting, and make it a new step in Sunday school work of our churches. And we would cordially invite all of the Independent societies who wish better instruction in their Sunday schools to also meet with us and join with us in this new departure.

Our Sunday School Society.

The edition of our catalogue published a few months ago has been exhausted, and a new edition has been published, containing several new issues and new works in preparation.

"The Growth of Christianity," by Rev. J. H. Crooker, is reported as completed in lesson leaflets at fifty cents a hundred. It is to be published in book form before long at thirty cents a copy. This work has been commended very highly by such men as Dr. Thomas, who thinks he has never seen any better treatment of the subject. It is admirably adapted to adult classes who wish to study the evolution of Christianity.

Another new issue on this catalogue is the new edition of "Unity Services and Songs," by Mr. Blake, which has been fully revised with one hundred new services and over sixty new songs. It is sold at forty cents a copy or four dollars a dozen.

The catalogue reports as in preparation "The Flowering of Christianity," by Rev. W. C. Gannett. This subject will be the concluding year of the Six Years' Course, and will take up the liberal Christian movement towards universal religion. It will run through the whole year, beginning with September, and will be issued in lesson leaflets at one dollar. Mr. Gannett's well-known ability in preparing helpful and suggestive Sunday School works, makes us sure that this will be the crowning volume in our Six Years' Course.

The catalogue also announces "Studies of Nature," a series of illustrated weekly lesson leaflets to teach the divinity of nature, for children from five to ten years of age. This is to furnish food for our little ones, whom our Six Years' Course has failed to reach. It is expected that this issue will begin the first of September.

Another work reported in preparation is "Early Steps of Religious Growth," by Rev. A. W. Gould. This will be the second year of the Six Years' Course put into book form, tracing the elements of religion, like spirit worship, ancestor worship, animal worship, water worship, fire worship, etc., from their

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Correspondence

Convention Morals.

EDITOR UNITY:—I am seriously afraid that your brief editorial note in the issue of Feb. 21 tends to place me in a wrong light before your readers. As many of these readers may not have seen my explanations in the *Christian Register* I am going to crave the courtesy of a little space in your columns. You say: "It seems a little hard that in the year of grace 1895 Mr. Chadwick should have to vindicate the right of conscience in politics against a Christian minister," and you quote Mr. Curtis's thesis that "no delegate has lost the privilege of doing right because he has tried to persuade others not to do wrong." Let me premise what I have to say upon the question at issue by remarking that I am an Independent in politics, that I did not vote for or support Mr. Blaine in 1884, and that I was profoundly indignant with those who blamed James F. Clarke for his support of Mr. Cleveland. Therefore, all my sympathies were with Mr. Curtis in his opposition to the Republican nominee. I did not blame Mr. Curtis for "bolting" the convention. I blame him because he did *not* bolt it. Let me explain. Mr. Curtis knew that Mr. Blaine would very probably be the candidate selected. He told a personal friend (with whom I am in correspondence) that there was not a moment during the convention that any other man could have been nominated. Mr. Curtis accepted a place in the New York delegation, implicitly pledged (as all the delegates were) to support the nominee of the convention. He gave no intimation, publicly, that his understanding of his political duty in the premises differed from that which generally prevailed. When Mr. Blaine was nominated Mr. Curtis made no sign. He could have voted against making the nomination unanimous. He did not. He could have left the convention at once. He did not. He remained and presumably voted for General Logan. Mr. Chadwick's explanation of this remarkable conduct is that Mr. Curtis was "not histrionic"; that is, he was willing to be misunderstood by his closest friends, rather than make a dramatic display of his oratory! Is this a satisfactory explanation? I have said, and I repeat, that the liberty of a party man is, and must of necessity be, a qualified liberty. And when a man becomes a delegate to a party convention he accepts the well-understood principles and methods that govern party action and discipline. If he is not willing to do this, he ought to stay out of political conventions and keep away from political machinery. This is so plain to me that I confess it was an astonishment to find that Mr. Cary, Mr. Chadwick, ex-Governor Chamberlain and the editor of UNITY are willing to justify conduct which I ignorantly supposed the best friends of Mr. Curtis passed over in silence.

I confess to having a very simple system of ethics. As I am a free trader and a believer in civil service reform, I have frankly abandoned the Republican party. I will not remain inside that party with the vain hope of converting it to these principles to which it is essentially antagonistic. And I would not go as an accredited delegate to a national convention of that party when I had secretly determined to antagonize its inevitable candidate, with the vain hope of converting those delegates who were already openly pledged to his support. I should feel that I

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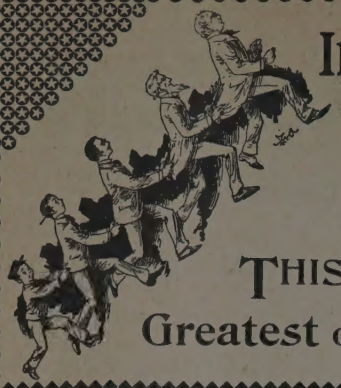

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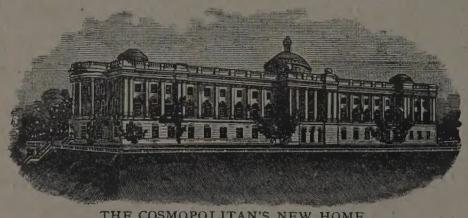

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St. Louis.

THE NEW UNITY gladly publishes Mr. Snyder's protest against the construction of his views on Convention Morals recently expressed in UNITY, and the writer of the editorial note referred to agrees with Mr. Snyder that Mr. Curtis should have voted against making Mr. Blaine's nomination unanimous (provided he had an opportunity). As for bolting, if it is possible thereby to secure the independent election of a fit man, it is advisable. Otherwise, generally not. It seems to be a question of expediency. But the real point at issue is whether one who accepts an election as delegate to a political convention is "implicitly pledged to support the nominee of the convention," whoever he may be, or, on the other hand, is at liberty (and, indeed, morally bound), not only to do his utmost to secure the selection of a fit man and the adoption of a worthy platform, but also to withhold his support from an unfit man or unworthy platform in case his efforts are unavailing. If the former alternative is maintained, then a highly conscientious man may never be a delegate to a political convention; and this seems to be the opinion of Mr. Snyder, who maintains at once his consistency and his loyalty to conscience by keeping free from party affiliations. But if the latter alternative be the true one, then the right of conscience in politics is vindicated, and an honest man may work with a party in any and every capacity so long as it seems to him to do right, without incurring any obligation to continue to support it a moment *longer* than it does right. We are glad to find that such practical politicians as the honorable and able ex-Governor Chamberlain support this view of the case; but we cannot see how any *honorable* politician could do otherwise; and we must regret that an able Christian minister holds the same low view of politics that the party heeler does—a view which, as Mr. Snyder's letter intimates, leads the Christian minister to retire from the political field in favor of the political hack. F. W. S.

A Visit to California.

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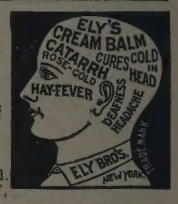

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On the other hand, any student could ask, through this column, for information regarding any works on any subject, like the saloon, tariff, municipal reform, bimetalism, profit sharing, etc., and could get this information from other members of the club or from any volunteer reader of THE NEW UNITY, or from some of our college or university teachers who are interested in the higher thought of today; and for those who wished it a course of study could be laid out along the lines of our new religious thought, and different members of the class could take different topics and report results in this column of THE NEW UNITY.

One such course, for example, could be a study of the world's great poets as prophets of religion. We have been in the habit of regarding only the Hebrew poets as prophets. They are indeed prophets; but the other true poets of the world are also true prophets, helping humanity to clearer ideas of God and duty, prayer and worship, sin and forgiveness, love and law. Job and Isaiah wrestled with great problems and saw great truths; but great truths were also seen by other prophets. Æschylus and Euripides, Lucretius and Virgil, Dante and Schiller and Goethe and Lessing, and our great English and American poets have all caught glimpses of great truths that the traditional religion of their day did not recognize. Now, if each member of the Mutual Study Club would take some one of these poets—the one that he or she liked best—and read his works carefully and report what that poet had to say on the great questions of God and duty, prayer and worship, sin and forgiveness, such work would help the student who did it; and if carefully and briefly reported through the columns of THE NEW UNITY it would help all the other students and all the thousands of readers of THE NEW UNITY.

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Of course, all such reports must be short enough to go into our Study Club column of THE NEW UNITY, and consequently should contain not more than eight hundred words; but a great deal can be said in eight hundred words, if put as compactly and systematically as possible.

Who will join such a Mutual Study Club as this? Let all such send in the subjects they are willing to study or the subjects they want some one else to study and report for them. All such communications should be addressed to A. W. Gould, 175 Dearborn street, Chicago.

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PEAK AND PRAIRIE. From a Colorado Sketch-book. By Anna Fuller. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. Cloth, 16 mo. pp. 391; $1.00.

It is perhaps hardly worth while for this reviewer to attempt a critical attitude toward a volume of Anna Fuller's sketches. There is a heart of sunshine in her work that never fails to take him captive. When he is his own master he is disposed to insist upon truth to nature, particularly to human nature, with its wonderful complex of good and evil, of high nobility and low and sordid meanness; and to argue that no picture can be effective, can be strong and true, unless it has its fair proportion of shadow. But when he is enjoying the restfulness, the sense of recreation (which is very near to exhilaration) which he always experiences in reading her stories, it is quite useless to say to himself that her writing is impossibly optimistic, and that it is absurd and unnatural to cast such an attractive halo of sentiment as she does about every figure that she touches; for he knows that whatever his philosophy may have to say about the matter, if the soul of truth were not in her writings they would not charm him as they do. Perhaps the explanation is that a sunny disposition like our author's, with its high confidence in the innate goodness of human nature, inevitably draws out the best that is in those it comes in contact with, so that, even though the evil in their natures ordinarily predominates over the good, it is otherwise in such a presence. We believe that this is so, and that even her brightest pictures are subjectively true; and if for most of us, who have not eyes to see the vision as she beholds it, life's pictures have always more of shadow in them than she represents, that is no impeachment of the truthfulness of her art. We have never doubted that the brighter sides of human nature which she delights to paint were *there*, but there was a time when we believed that human nature could not be truly portrayed unless the dark sides also were represented.

In these bright Colorado pictures we find the same fine sense of color that makes her so admirable a local artist, and the same delicate humor and strong human sympathy that have marked her earlier writings. Her writing is representatively American. Her brush paints not with the richness of a southern artist, but presents us with the delicate, albeit warm tints of a New England landscape. The quiet humor, rather suggested than actually expressed, speaks of the same home. And there is more than a hint of that nativity in the not passionate but strong and sincere human sympathy which flavors all that she writes and makes it the wholesome reading that it is. F. W. S.

A SIREN'S SON. By Susie Lee Bacon. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co. 192 pp, cloth $1.00; paper 25 cents.

The book is a study in half lights, deepening to shadows: mezzo-tints, often rich in tone and color but never once illumined by the glad light of hope and happiness. An undercurrent of pathos, a forecast of sorrow, are ever present in the life of the hero, who starts manhood with a question, and finds in it nothing but despair.

"'Maurice', said the boy suddenly.

"'Well?'

"'Do you believe in anything?'

"'Yes.'

"'What?' . . .

"'Shadows. Nothing else.'

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THE DEEPER MEANINGS. By Frederic A. Hinckley. Boston: Geo. H. Ellis. 89 pp.; 50 cents.

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E. T. L.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY to the Third Session of the Fifty-third Congress of the United States (Dec. 3, 1894). Treasury Department Document No. 1721. Washington: Government Printing Office. Cloth; pp. 424.

THE INCOME TAX LAW and Treasury Regulations Relative to Its Collection. Together with the speech delivered in elucidation of the same by Senator David B. Hill in the United States Senate, January 11, 1895. New York, Chicago, etc.: Brentano's. 90 pp.; 10 cents.

DEFECTIVE SPEECH AND DEAFNESS. By Lillie Eginton Warren. New York: Edgar S. Werner, 108 E. Sixteenth street. 116 pp.; $1.00.

MATTER, FORCE AND SPIRIT, or Scientific Evidence of a Supreme Intelligence. Anonymous. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 144 pp.; $1.00.

STORY OF THE LIFE OF JESUS. For the young. By W. L. Sheldon, Lecturer of the Ethical Society of St. Louis.

THE NINE CIRCLES, OR THE TORTURE OF THE INNOCENT. Being Records of Vivisection, English and Foreign. Third and revised edition. With introduction by Edward Berdoe, M. R. C. S., etc. London: Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection. Swan, Sonnenschein & Co. 1893. 147 pp.; paper, 6d.

ALONE TO THE ALONE. Prayers for Theists by Several Contributors. Edited, with a preface by Frances Power Cobbe. Author's edition. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1894. 110 pp.

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CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER (Universalist), corner of Warren avenue and Robey street, M. H. Harris, Minister.

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY, Grand Opera House, Clark street, near Randolph. M. M. Mangasarian, Minister.

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